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STATE FOR EUR/EE, L, HA, IO
VIENNA ALSO FOR BOSNIA

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: TFSROL: SEVERE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: VICTIM'S REPORT OF BEATINGS AND RAPE AT NOVI IZVOR PRISON.

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INTRODUCTION

11. (U) THIS IS ONE IN A SERIES OF REPORTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH WAR CRIMES VICTIMS CONDUCTED IN LATE 1993 IN MAOCA, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA BY AN OFDA (DART/ZAGREB) FIELD REPRESENTATIVE AND AN AMCIT IRC REPRESENTATIVE WHILE THEY WERE IN THE AREA ASSESSING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE NEEDS. THIS REPORT, LIKE THE OTHERS, NAMES VICTIMS AND, IN SOME CASES, PERPETRATORS AND THE DETAILS OF SPECIFIC CRIMES.

WITNESS INFORMATION

12. (LOU) THE WITNESS, AJKUNA MUMINOVIC (STRICTLY PROTECT), WAS BORN SEPTEMBER 26, 1952. SHE WAS A RESIDENT OF VLASENICA, A SMALL TOWN ABOUT 60 MILES BY ROAD NORTHEAST OF SARAJEVO, FROM 1964 TO JUNE, 1992. SHE WAS EMPLOYED IN A BANK AS AN OFFICE CLEANER AND MESSENGER.

THE WITNESS'S ACCOUNT

13. (U) ON JUNE 11, 1992 THE WITNESS AND HER HUSBAND ESCAPED FROM VLASENICA AND WENT TO CERSKA. THERE SHE WORKED AS A COOK FOR THE BOSNIAN ARMY UNTIL AUGUST 21,
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11992. ON THAT DAY SHE CONVINCED HER HUSBAND TO COME WITH HER AND WALK TO THE VILLAGE OF SUCESKA, NEAR SREBRENICA, WHERE, SHE HAD HEARD, HER SON, DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND GRANDCHILD WERE LIVING. SHE AND HER HUSBAND LEFT ON FOOT, ACCCOMPANIED BY THREE OTHERS. ON THE WAY, THEY CAME UPON A "CHETNIK" (SERBIAN ARMY) BARRICADE AND WERE FIRED ON. THE WITNESS WAS SHOT IN BOTH LEGS. HER HUSBAND AND THE THREE OTHERS RAN AWAY. SHE COULD HEAR THE FIRING CONTINUING FOR SOME TIME. AFTER IT STOPPED, SHE ATTEMPTED TO MOVE BUT COULD NOT, AND NOTICED SHE WAS LYING IN A POOL OF BLOOD. NIGHT WAS FALLING AND SHE WAS AFRAID DOGS MIGHT COME AND ATTACK HER. SHE CALLED FOR HELP THREE OR FOUR TIMES, BUT THEN PASSED OUT.

14. (U) WHEN THE WITNESS REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, SHE COULD HEAR THE "CHETNIKS" TALKING ABOUT HER. THEY THOUGHT SHE WAS A MAN. SHE TOLD THEM SHE WAS A WOMAN; THEY ASKED HER WHY SHE HAD NOT SURRENDERED, SINCE THEY WOULD NOT HAVE SHOT AT A WOMAN. THEY SAID THEY HAD MISTAKEN HER FOR A SCOUT, OR SPY. SHE INFORMED THEM SHE WAS ONLY TRYING TO FIND HER SON. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION THEY TOOK HER TO THE ROAD, WHERE HER WOUNDS WERE BANDAGED. SOME TIME LATER SHE WAS TAKEN BY CAR TO THE LOCAL CLINIC IN KRAVICA, NEAR BRATUNAC. SHE WAS GIVEN INJECTIONS AND REBANDAGED AND TAKEN ONWARD TO A HOSPITAL IN BRATUNAC, WHERE SHE WAS ADMITTED AND GIVEN A BLOOD TRANSFUSION.

15. (U) AN HOUR OR SO AFTER SHE ARRIVED AT THE BRATUNAC HOSPITAL A SOLDIER CAME TO INTERROGATE HER. HE ASKED WHERE SHE WAS GOING AND WHAT SHE WAS DOING. HE TOLD HER THAT IF SHE DID NOT TELL THE TRUTH HE WOULD TAKE OUT THE
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TRANSFUSION AND SHE WOULD DIE. SHE TOLD HIM WHAT SHE KNEW. LATER, SHE WAS TAKEN BY AMBULANCE TO ZVORNIK HOSPITAL, WHERE SHE WAS TREATED BY DR. ZORAN LAZAREVIC, A PHYSICIAN SHE KNEW FROM VLASENICA. HE TREATED HER VERY KINDLY. SHE WAS IN THE HOSPITAL FOR SEVEN MONTHS, FROM AUGUST 21, 1992 TO MARCH 23, 1993.

16. (U) ON MARCH 23 SHE WAS TAKEN FROM THE HOSPITAL BY SERBIAN POLICE, WHO TOLD HER SHE WAS BEING TAKEN TO GIVE A STATEMENT REGARDING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HER INJURY. HOWEVER, NO STATEMENT WAS TAKEN. INSTEAD SHE WAS TAKEN TO A PRISON AT NOVI IZVOR. FIVE MEN AND FOUR OTHER WOMEN WERE HELD WITH HER ON THE GROUND FLOOR IN SEPARATE ROOMS. THEY WERE GUARDED BUT WERE ALLOWED TO USE THE TOILET, WERE FED, AND HAD BLANKETS AND FOAM BLOCKS FOR BEDS. FROM TIME TO

TIME OTHER "CHETNIKS" WOULD COME AND ASK TO SEE THE MUSLIMS. THEY WOULD BEAT THE MEN; THE WOMEN COULD HEAR SCREAMS IN THE NEXT ROOM.

17. (U) THE OTHER WOMEN IN THE ROOM WITH THE WITNESS WERE A 73-YEAR-OLD WOMAN, FATA (NFI), 65-YEAR-OLD HATA KARIC AND HER 11-YEAR-OLD HALF-SERBIAN GRANDDAUGHTER, ALMA. A

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16-YEAR-OLD, SUADA, WAS EXCHANGED AFTER FIVE DAYS. HATA AND ALMA WERE ALLOWED VISITORS AND WERE GIVEN FAVORABLE TREATMENT. THEY OFTEN DRANK COFFEE WITH THE GUARDS AND USED THEIR INFLUENCE TO HAVE THE WITNESS TREATED MORE SEVERELY.

18. (U) THE WITNESS SAID SHE BECAME FRIENDS WITH ONE MAN, HASSAN (NFI), BEING DETAINED ON THE SAME FLOOR. HATA DID NOT APPROVE, AND TOLD THE GUARDS HE WAS AN EXTREMIST. AS A RESULT, THE WITNESS SAID, HASSAN WAS VERY BADLY BEATEN. HE HAD FOOTPRINTS ON HIS BODY FROM BEING STOMPED ON AND WAS VERY SWOLLEN AFTER THE BEATING HASSAN WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE FLOOR ABOVE.

19. (U) WHILE IMPRISONED AT NOVI IZVOR, THE WITNESS WAS ORDERED TO CLEAN ROOMS AND MAKE COFFEE. WHEN SHE PLEADED WITH HER CAPTORS NOT TO FORCE SUCH WORK UPON HER BECAUSE OF PAINS IN HER WOUNDED LEGS, SHE WAS BEATEN. SHE WAS INSULTED AND TOLD SHE WAS BEING TREATED WELL IN COMPARISON TO THE TREATMENT A SERB WOULD RECEIVE AT THE HANDS OF

MUSLIMS.

¶10. (U) AFTER ABOUT THREE MONTHS THE WITNESS WAS PLACED IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. SHE BLAMED THIS ON HATA'S CONTINUAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT HER. SHE WAS HELD IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR ONE WEEK; DURING THAT TIME SHE WAS GIVEN ONLY ONE MEAL. SHE WAS TRANSFERRED BACK TO THE COMMON ROOM FOR A SHORT TIME, THEN SENT BACK TO SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AGAIN. AT THE TIME OF HER ARRIVAL AT THE PRISON, THE PRINCIPAL GUARD WAS ONE "DUSAN" (NFI). WHEN HE LEFT, HE WAS REPLACED BY "MIRKO" AND "RATKO."

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¶11. (U) THE WITNESS RECOUNTED HOW SHE HAD BEEN BEATEN ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. ON ONE OF THESE, SHE SAID, "WHEN I HAD MADE COFFEE FOR MIRKO I MOVED HIS GUN SLIGHTLY TO PUT THE COFFEE DOWN. HE YELLED AT ME AND PUNCHED ME TWICE, HARD. THEN HE ORDERED HASSAN BROUGHT DOWN FROM UPSTAIRS. HE GAVE HASSAN A RUBBER STICK AND ORDERED HIM TO BEAT ME ON THE BACK. I WAS FORCED TO STAND AGAINST A WALL. HASSAN DID NOT BEAT ME HARD. THEN MIRKO TOOK THE STICK AND HIT HASSAN IN THE NECK HARD, TO SHOW HIM HOW HE SHOULD BEAT ME." AS A RESULT OF THE BLOW, SHE SAID, HASSAN COULD NOT SPEAK FOR 3 DAYS AFTERWARDS. UNDER THIS DURESS, HASSAN STRUCK HER VIOLENTLY 12 TIMES IN THE KIDNEY REGION. AS HASSAN WAS ADMINISTERING THE BEATING, MIRKO SAID SARCASTICALLY THAT HE WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE HER HARMED, AND THAT IT WAS HER OWN PEOPLE WHO WERE BEATING HER.

¶12. (U) AFTER THIS INCIDENT THE WITNESS WAS RETURNED TO SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. THREE DAYS LATER, DUSAN REAPPEARED AND SPOKE TO MIRKO AND RATKO. HE CAME TO THE WITNESS'S ROOM BRINGING TWO YOUNG BOSNIANS, 17 AND 18 YEARS OLD, WHO HAD BEEN CAPTURED FLEEING FROM CERSKA TO TUZLA. THE TWO BOYS WERE VERY FRIGHTENED, THE WITNESS SAID.

¶13. (U) THE WITNESS SAID DUSAN ORDERED HER AND THE TWO BOYS TO REMOVE ALL THEIR CLOTHES. HE FORCED HER TO BEND OVER AND ORDERED ONE OF THE BOYS TO SODOMIZE HER WHILE FORCING HER TO PERFORM ORAL SEX ON THE OTHER. WHEN SHE COMPLAINED OF INTENSE PAIN IN HER INJURED LEGS, DUSAN ALLOWED HER TO LIE DOWN BUT CONTINUED TO FORCE THE TWO YOUNG BOSNIANS TO VIOLATE HER, BOTH ORALLY AND VAGINALLY. AFTER SOME TIME, SHE SAID, DUSAN ASKED THE TWO BOYS IF

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THEY WERE SATISFIED, AND SAID HE WOULD COME BACK THE NEXT DAY WITH TWO OTHER MEN.

¶14. (U) AT ABOUT 1:00 A.M. THAT MORNING MIRKO CAME INTO HER ROOM. HE SAT IN A CHAIR AND ORDERED HER TO PERFORM ORAL SEX ON HIM. WHEN SHE RESISTED HE RAPED HER ANALLY. HE TOLD HER NOT TO TELL ANYONE. SHE BLED A GREAT DEAL AS A RESULT OF THIS ASSAULT, THE WITNESS SAID.

¶15. (U) LATER THAT MORNING MIRKO CAME INTO HER ROOM. SEEING THE BLOOD ON THE FLOOR, HE ASKED WHAT IT WAS. WHEN SHE TOLD HIM IT WAS THE RESULT OF HIS ASSAULT ON HER EARLIER THAT MORNING, HE ORDERED HER TO CLEAN IT UP AND NOT TO TELL ANYONE. AT THIS POINT THE WITNESS, STILL BLOODY FROM MIRKO'S ASSAULT, BEGAN TO MENSTRUATE. THE GUARD RATKO TOLD HER TO TAKE A BATH BUT SHE DEMURRED, SAYING SHE COULD NOT BECAUSE OF HER PERIOD. EVERY DAY THEY ORDERED HER TO TAKE A BATH AND EVERY DAY SHE REFUSED CLAIMING SHE WAS MENSTRUATING. AT ONE POINT MIRKO ASKED HER WHAT SHE WOULD THINK WHEN DUSAN STARTED SENDING "CLIENTS" TO HER. SHE KNEW MIRKO OWNED A CAFE, SHE SAID, AND SUSPECTED HE WOULD FORCE HER INTO PROSTITUTION IF SHE WERE TO TAKE A BATH. THUS SHE CONTINUED TO CLAIM SHE HAD

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HER PERIOD AND REFUSED TO BATHE FOR A LONG TIME. THIS WAS IN JUNE 1993.

¶16. (U) THE WITNESS SAID SHE KNEW MIRKO AND RATKO HAD BEEN WOUNDED AS SOLDIERS BEFORE THEY BECAME POLICE PRISON GUARDS. RATKO WAS ON TRANQUILIZERS, FOR WHICH MIRKO BLAMED THE MUSLIMS. ON ONE OCCASION MIRKO TRIED TO FORCE THE WITNESS TO TAKE A DOSE OF THESE TRANQUILIZER PILLS; WHEN SHE STEPPED BACKWARD TO AVOID THIS, HE PUNCHED HER IN THE FACE. MIRKO STOPPED RATKO FROM CONTINUING TO BEAT HER.

¶17. (U) BEFORE SHE WAS EXCHANGED, THE WITNESS WAS TAKEN BACK TO THE HOSPITAL TO HAVE THE PLATES REMOVED FROM HER WOUNDED LEGS. AT THAT TIME, HOWEVER, SHE WAS GREATLY DISTRAUGHT, HAVING JUST LEARNED OF THE DEATH OF HER SON. DR. LAZAREVIC WAS KIND TO HER AND AGREED NOT TO OPERATE. WHEN SHE WAS TAKEN BACK TO THE PRISON, DUSAN WAS ANGRY BECAUSE THE PLATES HAD NOT BEEN REMOVED FROM HER LEGS. HE THREATENED NEVER TO EXCHANGE HER UNTIL THEY WERE REMOVED, BECAUSE SUCH PLATES WERE BADLY NEEDED BY WOUNDED SERB SOLDIERS. IF SHE WAS RELEASED THEY WOULD BE USED ON MUSLIMS, HE SAID. NONETHELESS SHE WAS EXCHANGED, WITH THE PLATES STILL IN HER LEGS, ON JULY 21, 1993. SHE BELIEVES SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED IF SHE HAD NOT BEEN RELEASED.

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